

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6334

UNCLAS LONDON 15976

PASS DEPT OF LABOR - GERALD P. HOLMES

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, UK

SUBJECT: REQUEST BY THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME AND WEALTH

1. THE ROYAL COMMISSION HAS ASKED OUR HELP ON AN URGENT BASIS IN SECURING INFORMATION WHICH WILL HELP IT IN PURSUING ITS OBJECTIVES, I.E., "TO HELP SECURE A FAIRER DISTRIBUTION OF INCOMES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, THERE IS A NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE AND OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS OF ALL FORMS OF INCOME FROM EMPLOYMENT AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT AT THE HIGHER LEVELS (EXCEEDING, SAY, 10,000 POUNDS A YEAR BEFORE TAX)."

2. IT SPECIFICALLY SEEKS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: WHAT DOES THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS' POPULATION REPORTS COVER (IN BOTH ITS ANNUAL AND DECENNIAL CENSUSES OF FAMILY INCOME) IN THE WAY OF INCOME INFORMATION AND WHAT ARE THE MAIN PUBLICATIONS IN WHICH THE RESULTS ARE TO BE FOUND?

3. THE COMMISSION UNDERSTANDS THAT THE OLD OFFICE OF BUSINESS ECONOMICS PUBLISHED VOLUMES ENTITLED, "INCOME DISTRIBUTION IN THE US," AND WOULD APPRECIATE DETAILED

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REFERENCES. THE COMMISSION ASKS IF ITS SUCCESSOR ORGANI-

ZATION, THE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS, CONTINUES TO PUBLISH "INCOMES DISTRIBUTION IN THE US," EITHER AS PART OF THE NATIONAL INCOME AND PRODUCT ACCOUNTS OF THE US, OR AS SEPARATE PUBLICATIONS.

4. THE COMMISSION CONSIDERS THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM AS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE ON DATA ON WEALTH. IT ASSUMES THAT THE "SURVEY OF FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CONSUMERS" IS THE NEW TITLE FOR THE "SURVEY OF CONSUMER FINANCES," WHICH THE BOARD PUBLISHED. IT WOULD APPRECIATE DETAILED REFERENCES IN REGARD TO THIS, TOGETHER WITH THE SCOPE OF THE DATA AND ITS MANNER OF COLLECTION. IT ASSUMES THAT, AS IN THE UK, THE ESTATE TAX RETURNS CAN BE USED TO PROVIDE A DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH AND WISHES TO RECEIVE APPROPRIATE REFERENCES TO THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE.

5. THE COMMISSION ALSO WISHES TO KNOW WHETHER THERE ARE OTHER SOURCES ON INCOMES AND WEALTH AT THE STATE AND CITY LEVELS.

6. IN ITS REQUEST THE COMMISSION NOTES THAT WHILE "THIS IS A HEAVY DEMAND IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR IT TO BE AWARE OF THE MEANS BY WHICH DATA IS OBTAINED IN OTHER COUNTRIES, SINCE IT WILL WISH TO COMPARE THE WAY IN WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES TREAT THIS QUESTION."

7. IN VIEW OF THE COMMISSION'S URGENCY, WE WOULD APPRECIATE AN EARLY REPLY, TOGETHER WITH ANY DOCUMENTS WHICH WOULD HELP ILLUSTRATE THE INFORMATION REQUIRED. SPIERS

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